

The Three Incestuous Sisters: An Illustrated Novel

By Audrey Niffenegger

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The Three Incestuous Sisters is an evocative, illustrated book by the best-selling author of *The Time Traveler's Wife*, Audrey Niffenegger. Reminiscent of the gothic style of Edward Gorey, Niffenegger's visually stunning narrative affirms her genius as a storyteller. These rich pages present the tale of three very different sisters: one who is beautiful, one who is smart, and one who is talented. A melodrama of sibling rivalry unfurls as one sister is driven mad with jealousy due to the passionate love affair of another. Escalating to a dizzying climax, the romance of the two lovers ends in sabotage, shame, and despair. Haunting illustrations and lyrical prose depict a timeless tale of love, revenge, and ultimately, transcendence.

The Three Incestuous Sisters is a unique and lavish tour de force, which showcases Audrey Niffenegger's incredible talent as an artist and a writer.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly
Niffenegger, author of the two-plus-million-copy bestseller *The Time Traveler's Wife*, showcases her artistic talent in an oversized "novel in pictures" she calls "the book of my heart, a fourteen-year labor of love." It's the strange and haunting story of three sisters who "lived together in a lonely house by the sea, near the lighthouse, miles away from the city." Blonde Bettine is the youngest and prettiest, redhead Clothilde is "the most talented" and blue-haired Ophile, the eldest, is considered the smartest. When lightning kills the lighthouse keeper, his son, Paris, arrives to take his place; Paris and Bettine quickly fall in love and conceive a child. Jealous Ophile misbehaves badly; psychic Clothilde communes with the unborn baby, whom she names the Saint; and Bettine and Paris run away to the city, where tragedy strikes. Niffenegger's spare, full-page, sepia-toned aquatints ("an idiosyncratic, antique" medium) are evocative and Gorey-esque; they tell the story more than the minimalist prose does. And Niffenegger's afterword is illuminating, both about the process of making aquatints and about her productive methods of procrastination: *The Time Traveler's Wife*, she reveals, "started its life as the project I played with when I should have been finishing *Sisters*." *(Sept.)*
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From Booklist
Starred Review Niffenegger, author of the best-selling novel *The Time Traveler's Wife* (2003), is an accomplished artist as well as an imaginative writer, and she now presents a shivery fairy tale in the form of an eerily beautiful novel-in-pictures. The minimal yet spooky text faces dramatically nuanced full-page prints portraying three grown, orphaned sisters. Bettina, the youngest, is a lovely blond; Ophile, the unhappy eldest, has blue hair; Clothilde, in the middle and in a world of her own, is a redhead. The svelte sisters possess extravagantly long hair and tapering, expressive hands; wear clinging, gray, ankle-length dresses; and are as powerfully evocative as dancers in a Martha Graham production. They live harmoniously in "a lonely house by the sea" until the late lighthouse keeper's handsome son, Paris, appears and falls in love with Bettina, who soon becomes pregnant. Clothilde, whose esoteric talents include levitation, communes happily with her in utero nephew, while Ophile goes mad with jealousy. Niffenegger's grim yet erotic tale and stunningly moody gothic prints possess the sly subversion of Edward Gorey, the emotional valence of Edvard Munch, and her very own brilliant use of iconographic pattern, surprising perspective, and tensile line in the service of a delectable, otherworldly sensibility. *Donna Seaman*
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Review
"Haunting illustrations and sparse yet lyrical prose...a poignant and innovative addition to the picture-book field." -- Lucy Davies Daily Telegraph

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Kevin Serna:

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Carlos Lauzon:

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